

Proposed June 2004



GREENWOOD/PHINNEY *neighborhood*



Design Guidelines



City of Seattle
Department of Planning
and Development



Seattle Design Review Program

Design Review: *Greenwood/Phinney
Neighborhood
Design Guidelines*

Contents

Background Information

Design Review in Seattle's Neighborhoods	III
Context and Priority Issues: Greenwood Core	IV

Design Guidelines

A. Site Planning	3
B. Height, Bulk, and Scale	5
C. Architectural Elements and Materials	7
D. Pedestrian Environment	10
E. Landscaping	12
F. Town Center Specific Guidelines	13

Appendix

Positive Design Examples	17
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Design Review in Seattle's Neighborhoods

What is Design Review?

Design Review provides a forum for citizens and developers to work toward achieving a better urban environment through attention given to fundamental design principles. Design Review is intended to affect how new development can contribute positively to Seattle's neighborhoods. Design guidelines offer a flexible tool, an alternative to prescriptive zoning requirements that will allow new development to respond better to the distinctive character of its surroundings.

Design Review has three principal objectives:

1. to encourage better design and site planning to enhance the character of the city and ensure that new development fits sensitively into neighborhoods;
2. to provide flexibility in the application of development standards; and
3. to improve communication and participation among developers, neighbors and the City early in the design and siting of new development.

Design Review is a component of a Master Use Permit (MUP) application, along with other components, such as environmental review (SEPA), variances, etc., administered by the Department of Planning and Development (DPD). Like these other components, Design Review applications involve public notice and opportunity for comment. Unlike other components, projects subject to Design Review are brought before the Design Review Board for its recommendations or to staff through Administrative Design Review. The final decision on Design Review is made by the DPD Director, together with the decisions on any other MUP components. This decision can be appealed to the Hearing Examiner.

What are Neighborhood-Specific Design Guidelines?

Design Review uses both the 26 Citywide Guidelines and guidelines that are specific to individual neighborhoods. Once adopted by the City Council, neighborhood-specific design guidelines augment the Citywide Guidelines. Together they are the basis for project review within the neighborhood.

The guidelines for Greenwood/Phinney augment the existing Citywide Design Guidelines

The Greenwood/Phinney neighborhood design guidelines reveal the character of the neighborhood as known to its residents and businesses. The guidelines help to reinforce existing character and protect the qualities that a neighborhood values most in the face of change. Thus, a neighborhood's guidelines, in conjunction with the Citywide Design Guidelines, can increase overall awareness of good design and involvement in the design review process.

More About Design Review

More information about Design Review can be found in the Citywide Design Guidelines and in the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC 23.41).

Information includes:

- Projects Subject to Design Review
- How Design Guidelines are Applied
- Who Serves on the Design Review Board
- Development Standards Departures

Context and Priority Issues: Greenwood Core

The first “Key Integrated Strategy” of the 1999 Greenwood/Phinney Ridge Neighborhood Plan is “The creation of a vital Greenwood that supports an economically viable main street along Greenwood Avenue North and a redeveloped town center.” This strategy envisions the creation of vital pedestrian streetscapes, a pedestrian-friendly walkway from Greenwood Avenue North west into the business core, sidewalk, traffic calming, lighting landscaping and parking and transportation management program to enhance the main street and town center. This strategy also calls for the development of a master plan for the Greenwood town center core.

As part of the implementation of the neighborhood plan, the 2001 Greenwood/Phinney Main Street Design Report identified actions to pursue this strategy. The Design Report identifies key pedestrian links and street improvements to upgrade circulation, visual character, pedestrian conditions and ultimately the economic development of the Greenwood Business Core. This includes the commercial area bounded by 85th Street, Third Avenue Northwest, 87th Street and Greenwood Avenue North, and including commercial properties on the south side of 85th Street and the east side of Greenwood Avenue North and the north side of the 87th Street/Greenwood Avenue North intersection. See page 4 of the design report.

It is especially important that development projects in the Greenwood Business Core, particularly those projects on sites over ¼ acre and those on corner lots, implement objectives of the Neighborhood Plan and the Design Report by addressing the following:

- Locating the building adjacent to the public sidewalk or orienting the building to a plaza or publicly accessible open space that is located

adjacent to the sidewalk. A continuous “street wall” of commercial development is particularly important in the along Greenwood Avenue North between North 84th and North 87th Streets and along 85th Street between Palatine and Phinney Avenues (also see A-2).

- Providing sidewalks along the street rights-of-way that are at least 12 feet wide. Include street trees and other plantings between the street and the main walkway to provide a perceived buffer between pedestrians and vehicle traffic. (Pedestrian-friendly open spaces are definitely encouraged.) Street tree species should be in accordance with applicable street tree plans contact the neighborhood planning group.
- Providing pedestrian-oriented facades along public rights-of-way and designated pedestrian pathways (to include the proposed east-west pedestrian walkway in the Design Report). “Pedestrian-oriented facades” generally feature window areas or window displays, artwork or other amenities along the majority of the ground floor, and substantial weather protection (refer to applicable requirements in the Land Use Code, including §23.47.040–23.47.050, Pedestrian Designated Zone requirements).
- Providing a mid-block, east-west pedestrian walkway as identified in the Design Report (see Action 13 in the Design Report). Where possible, include a minimum corridor width of 25 feet, with at least a 12-foot wide walking surface, pedestrian lighting, pedestrian amenities (including landscaping, seating, trash receptacles and other street furniture, and where possible, public art), and pedestrian-oriented facades (as described above).

- Providing landscaping where possible, particularly along the proposed mid-block pedestrian walkway identified in the Design Report (see Action 13 in the Design Report). Include flowering trees and shrubs for accents and street trees, where possible, along the walkway.
- Addressing Guideline A-5 Corner Lots.
- Locating primary commercial and public building entrances directly from the sidewalk, pedestrian open space or pedestrian pathways.
- Minimizing paved surface devoted to vehicle circulation and parking, excepting that circulation improvements may be needed in areas where the street grid is incomplete. Below-grade or in-structure parking is strongly recommended.
- Minimizing the impact of driveways on pedestrian travel. Primary vehicle access points should be located on north-south side streets such as First, Third and Palatine Avenues. No more than two vehicle access points per street on each block should be provided for commercial uses. Vehicle access from 87th Street should only occur for single-purpose residential uses.
- Ensuring that public open spaces and pedestrian travel routes have sidewalks or other walkways, are safe and well lit, and respond to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- Employ façade modulation and articulation to provide appropriate human and architectural scale [see C-1(b) and C-3].

Finally, while the guidelines herein focus on areas within the Urban Village Boundary, they are intended to apply to projects subject to design review in the Greenwood/Phinney Ridge Neighborhood Planning Boundary.

Residential Urban Village
(Village No. 102)

Strategic Planning Office
City of Seattle

BOUNDARY MAP

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No warranties of any sort, including
accuracy, fitness, or commerciality,
accompany this product.

December 1999

Legend

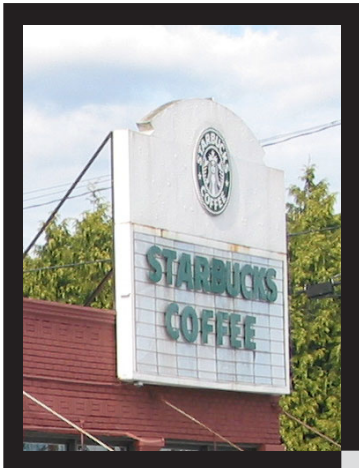
- URBAN VILLAGE BOUNDARY
- STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY
- INSIDE URBAN VILLAGE BOUNDARY
- OUTSIDE URBAN VILLAGE BOUNDARY

Scale

0 500 1000 1500 2000 Feet

0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles

Greenwood/Phinney Neighborhood Design Guidelines



Greenwood/Phinney Design Guidelines

Projects requiring design review must address the community design guidelines in this handbook as well as the Citywide Design Guidelines.

Note 1: The guidelines are numbered to correspond to the Citywide Design Guidelines (A-1, A-2, etc.). A gap in the numerical sequence means there are no neighborhood design guidelines for that particular Citywide Guideline.

Note 2: The Appendix at the end of the document includes positive design features existing in the Greenwood/Phinney Neighborhood.



A Site Planning

responding to site characteristics

streetscape compatibility

A. Site Planning

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics

a. Views

Numerous east-west streets offer excellent views of Green Lake, Puget Sound and the Olympic and Cascade Mountains from Greenwood Avenue North. Buildings should be located to take advantage of these views and to enhance views from the public right-of-way. Examples of methods to do this include setbacks from view corridors, landscape elements and street trees to frame views rather than block them, and pedestrian spaces with views of the water and mountains.

A-2 Streetscape Compatibility

a. Reinforcement of Commercial and Residential Development Patterns

Commercial development in the Greenwood/Phinney corridor has historically been oriented towards the street, with buildings up against the sidewalks. Most residential developments have modest landscaped setbacks and are built slightly above grade to allow for privacy and a sense of transition from the street. Continuing this pattern will reinforce the character of both the business districts and residential areas. Specifically:

1. Commercial development in the planning area should be built up to the sidewalk. Along North/Northwest 85th Avenue, new commercial buildings should be set back sufficiently to provide 12-foot minimum sidewalk (including street trees and other plantings) widths. Commercial buildings may be setback off the street if pedestrian-oriented space (see definition) is provided between the sidewalk and the building.
2. Residential buildings (on Greenwood Avenue North and North/Northwest 85th Street) should be setback five to 15 feet from the sidewalk to provide extensive landscaping in the front yard. When possible, the first floor of single-purpose residential units facing Greenwood Avenue North or North/Northwest 85th Street should be located at least three feet above the sidewalk level to provide a sense of privacy and surveillance over the street. In such instances, the structure should be compatible with the local context (surrounding houses, neighborhood commercial uses and/or small to moderate scale multi-family residential structures).



Figure 2: The small, heavily landscaped setback of this residential building on Greenwood Avenue North and 76th Street enhances the residential environment.



Site Planning

streetscape
compatibility

corner lots

b. Treatment of Side Streets

Some treatment of side-streets off of Greenwood Avenue North and 85th Street is important to create an effective transition to residential neighborhoods. Some options to consider include:

- Setbacks with view-framing landscaping (see A-1)
- Arbors with hanging plants
- Small outdoor spaces with trees and landscaping

A-10 Corner Lots

Due to street offsets and focal intersections identified in the neighborhood plan, there are several important intersections where pedestrian traffic and street character are important. The design character and pedestrian quality of the following corners are particularly important and should be emphasized:

- Phinney/Greenwood Avenues and 67th Street intersection
- Misaligned cross streets on Greenwood Avenue North
- 85th Street and Greenwood Avenue North intersection
- NW 85th Street and Third Avenue Northwest
- Greenwood Avenue North and 73rd, 80th, and 87th Street intersections

Appropriate methods to do this include:

- Primary building entrance is at the corner
- Architectural designs that emphasizes the entry
- Landscaping, kiosks, benches, signage or other feature that contributes to a sense of community and/or the demarcation of the area.

B. Height Bulk & Scale

B-1 Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility

a. Impact of New Buildings on the Street

Consider the setback of upper stories of new mixed-use development on Greenwood Avenue North and 85th Street to reduce the dominance of new buildings on the street. See C-1 to provide measures to distinguish the ground floor from upper stories.

Also, new commercial development should respect the small-scale historical pattern of storefronts on Greenwood Avenue North. Typically, the older storefronts are about 50 feet in width and feature brick, stone or other masonry units. Some also feature architectural details that provide interest and a human scale to the buildings.



**Height, Bulk
and Scale**

height, bulk and
scale compatibility

b. Zone Edges

Careful siting, building design and massing should be utilized to achieve a sensitive transition between more intensive and less intensive zones. Design techniques include:

- increasing the building setback from the zone edge at the ground level;
- reducing the bulk of the building's upper floors nearest to the less intensive zone;
- reducing the overall height of the structure;
- using of extensive landscaping or decorative screening.

Design departures

If techniques described in the Citywide guidelines are used to successfully achieve a sensitive transition between these zones, the following departures are suggested for consideration by applicants and Board members to offset the loss of development opportunity within the Greenwood/Phinney neighborhood:

- relax the 64 percent coverage limit for the residential portion of mixed-use buildings, as long as other requirements are met
- relax the minimum size limit for nonresidential uses. Allow up to a 15 percent reduction in the required commercial area
- relax the open space requirements

An additional zone edge design option may be desirable in areas where an alley does not exist:

- Allow for a building's ground floor to be built to the property line of the less intensive zone as long as the building wall is less than 15 feet in height, contains no windows and upper floors are stepped back at least 10 feet.

B
Height, Bulk and Scale
height, bulk and scale compatibility

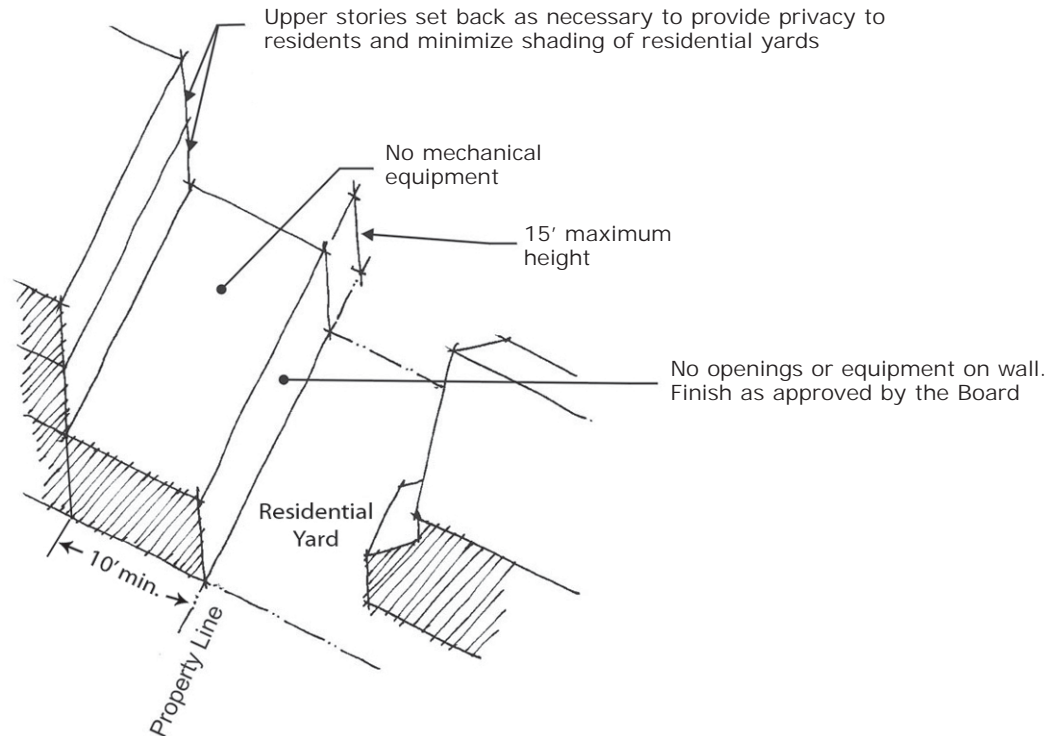


Figure 3: This zone edge option may be desirable in instances where there is no alley between the residential and non-residential uses.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

C-1 Architectural Context

a. Signage

The design and placement of signs plays an important role in the visual character and identity of the community. Key aspects of this effort are to ensure that the signs are at an appropriate scale and fit in with the building's architecture.

1. Install building signs that reinforce the character of the building and local district. Encourage small signs incorporated in the building's architecture, along a sign band, on awnings or marquees, located in windows or hung perpendicular to the building façade.

The following signs are generally discouraged:

- Large illuminated box (back-lit "can") signs are discouraged unless they are treated or designed to be compatible with the character of surrounding development. Back-lit awnings (also see C-4a) should be limited to one horizontal-mounted lighting tube. Small neon signs are an alternative as long as they are unintrusive to adjacent residences.
- Pole-mounted signs should be discouraged. Small monument signs are an alternative (up to 32 square feet in area as measured as the smallest rectangle that encloses the lettering and logo elements) if they are part of a low wall screening parking and abutting pedestrian-oriented space. They must not present a driver, pedestrian or bicyclist visibility problem.



**Architectural
Elements and
Materials**

architectural context

b. Façade Articulation and Modulation

1. Multi-family residential structures: Façade articulation and modulation in the Greenwood/Phinney Ridge Planning Area are most critical in multi-family residential buildings. Use façade articulation and architectural elements to make new construction compatible with the surrounding architectural context. Architectural features such as those listed below can add further interest to a building, and lend buildings a human scale:
 - Pitched roof
 - Covered front porch
 - Vertically proportioned windows
 - Window trim and eave boards
 - Elements typical of neighborhood house forms



Figure 4: Similar roof, window treatment, proportional massing and setbacks provide a level of continuity between these structures despite the size difference.



Architectural Elements and Materials

architectural context

architectural concept and consistency

2. Commercial structures: Façade modulation and articulation are less critical in commercial or mixed-use structures as long as appropriate levels of detail are present to break up the façade. Many of these structures are simple boxes that are well-fenestrated and contain a number of details that add interest at the ground level and lend buildings a human scale. Modulation of commercial (including mixed-use) structures at the street level is discouraged unless the space or spaces created by the modulation are large enough to be usable by pedestrians.

C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency

a. Architectural Styles

The Phinney/Greenwood Avenue and 85th Street corridors are characterized by their utilitarian, non-flamboyant, traditional architectural styles (except for churches). Some important points to consider in making new development consistent and compatible with existing development include:

- small-scale architectural details at the ground level, including color, texture/patterns, materials, window treatment, sculptural elements, etc;
- landscaping is an important component of the overall character, particularly for residential development,
- personalization of individual businesses is a key feature of both corridors.



Figure 5: Personalization of businesses is a key feature of both corridors.

b. Building Entrances

Almost all of the existing buildings located at corners along the Greenwood/ Phinney and 85th Street corridors have entrances at the corner. Even when the principle off-street parking areas are located on the side of the building, a primary building entrance should be located at the corner. This concept is consistent with traditional neighborhood commercial designs and important in facilitating pedestrian activity at the street corners.

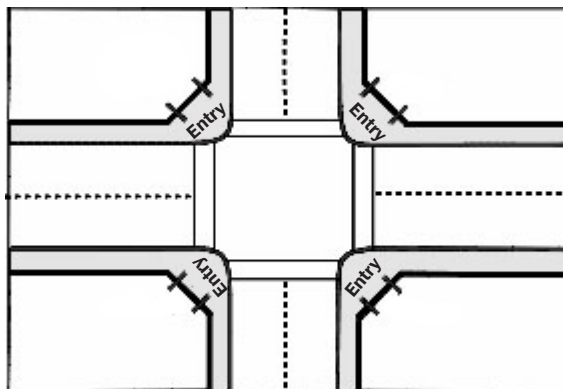


Figure 6: Corner building entries are encouraged.



Architectural Elements and Materials

architectural concept and consistency

human scale

exterior finish materials

C-3 Human Scale

New multi-story developments should consider methods to coordinate a building's upper and lower stories. The parts should function as a composition — not necessarily requiring the top and bottom to be the same or similar.

C-4 Exterior Finish Materials

New buildings should feature durable, attractive and well-detailed finish materials. Examples of structures in the neighborhood that feature desirable exterior finish materials are provided in the Appendix.

a. Building Materials in the Greenwood/Phinney Avenues and 85th Street Corridors

Again, buildings within these corridors are characterized by their utilitarian, non-flamboyant, traditional architectural styles. Brick is the most common surface treatment in the commercial areas and should be encouraged. Plastic awnings should be strongly discouraged. As an alternative, architectural canopies are encouraged to provide weather protection and a place for business signage.

D. Pedestrian Environment

D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances

a. Pedestrian Open Spaces

Small, usable open spaces are an important design objective. Open spaces incorporating the following features are encouraged with new commercial and mixed-use development:

- Good sun exposure during most of the year
- Located in areas containing or expecting significant pedestrian traffic
- Storefront and/or residential windows face onto space at the ground level and/or on upper stories
- There are a variety of places to sit
- Pedestrians have something to look at, whether it is a view of the street, landscaping, a mural, etc.
- CPTED features referenced in the City-wide design guidelines



Pedestrian Environment

pedestrian open spaces and entrances

b. Make 85th Street and Greenwood Avenue, North of 87th Street, More Pedestrian Friendly

New development should make the 85th Street corridor and the Greenwood Avenue corridor, north of 87th Street, more pleasant to pedestrians:

- The building entry should face the street
- Encourage pedestrian activities
- Discourage new billboards
- Encourage pedestrian-oriented facades
- Encourage weather protection
- Below-grade parking, when possible

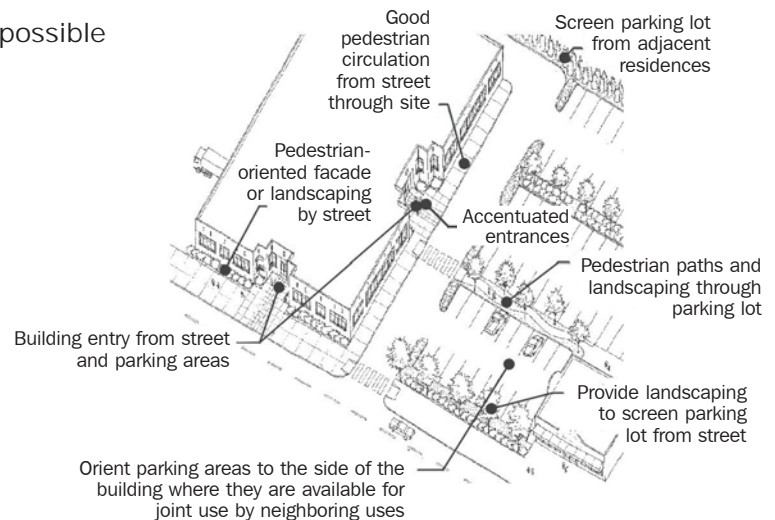


Figure 7: A good site design example for NW 85th Street.

c. Pedestrian Amenities

When applicable, encourage new development to integrate pedestrian amenities including but not limited to street trees (30 feet on-center, where possible), pedestrian lighting (30 feet on-center, where possible), benches, newspaper racks, public art, and bike racks to maintain and strengthen pedestrian activity.

D-2 Blank Walls

Storefronts along the sidewalk edge — particularly in neighborhood commercial districts — should be continuous, minimizing blank walls. Where unavoidable, blank walls shall be treated with one or more of the methods suggested in the Citywide Design Guidelines or with murals.

Note: Successful murals typically require a clear vision, a strong meaning behind it (historical, cultural, etc.), some flair or whimsy, and exemplary execution.



**Pedestrian
Environment**

blank walls

E. Landscaping

E-1 Special Considerations

(a) Landscape Character

The use of drought tolerant shrubs or other landscaping rather than lawns is encouraged for planting strips and other open spaces.

(b) Landscaping to Address Special Site Conditions.

Select and manage trees to improve views.

(c) Street Trees

Infill street trees throughout the planning area. Consult the neighborhood planning group for the appropriate tree species for particular sites.

(d) Trees as Buffers

Use trees as buffers between high intensity and low intensity uses.

(e) Planting Strips

Provide planting strips to create a buffer between the sidewalk and vehicle traffic along streets that contain no on-street parking.



Landscaping

reinforce existing
character of the
neighborhood

F. Town Center Specific Guidelines

The following Town Center Specific Design Guidelines were developed from the urban design recommendations contained in the 2002 Greenwood Town Center Plan. The Town Center Plan provides significant additional detail regarding each of the urban design concepts discussed below. The Plan also contains recommendations that address other redevelopment concepts including the potential use of contract re-zones, traffic improvements and streetscape improvements. The Town Center Plan can be downloaded from the following website: www.anactualwebsite.gov.

F-1 Compatibility

Use the human-scale historical pattern of storefronts on Greenwood Avenue North as a guide in developing new structures abutting Town Center streets. New development should respond to Greenwood's existing context by matching window and opening proportions, entryway patterns, scale and location of building cornices, proportion and degree of trim work and other decorative details, and employing a variety of appropriate finish materials.

F-2 Mid-Block Connections

Where relevant new structures should incorporate and enhance the mid-block connection concept. Mid-block connections should be visually open and activated by pedestrian lighting, landscaping and human scaled, pedestrian oriented architectural features and details. Inclusion of public art and neighborhood signage is encouraged. These connections should align with the mid-block crosswalk and may vary in width.



Figure 8: This mid-block connection offers a pedestrian corridor activated by entrances onto the space and movable seating.

F

Town Center
compatibility
mid-block
connections

F-3 Open Space

Encourage a publicly accessible urban plaza, potentially incorporated into one of the north-south streets and the proposed mid-block connection. This adjoining street could be temporarily closed to traffic for special public gatherings. The plaza could include seasonal landscaping and year-round green, seating walls, benches or other street furniture, and public art.

Figure 9: With its extensive landscaping, this plaza feels like a protected, relaxing park. Movable seating creates small gathering spaces, but can be removed for special public gatherings.



Town Center
open space
street pattern
landscaping

F-4 Street Pattern

New development should respond to the existing street pattern to create pedestrian and visual continuity.

F-5 Landscaping

Use of plants that are native to the Pacific Northwest is encouraged. In parking areas consider using architectural raised planters, earth berms, terraced planters and trellises. New development should include streetscape improvements to the public street and private internal drives where possible. Coordinate landscaping and tree location to maintain visibility of business signage.



Figure 10: Plantings enhance the street's vitality while maintaining visibility of business signage.

F-6 Pedestrian Lighting

Provide lighting that enhances pedestrian safety and comfort. Pedestrian street lights should conform to the existing Greenwood lighting design plan (Lumec Z-14 Green finish GN8TX). New buildings are encouraged to incorporate custom lighting fixtures along sidewalks and public pathways. Special care should be made to not over-illuminate.

F-7 Street Elements

Integrate public art into buildings and landscaping. Small signs — especially blade signs that hang over sidewalks — should be incorporated. Signage for way-finding, especially parking, is encouraged. Coordinate signage plans with the Greenwood/Phinney Main Street Plan.



Figure 11: Small signs that hang over the sidewalk create a pedestrian friendly shopping atmosphere.



Town Center
pedestrian lighting
street elements
structure orientation

F-8 Structure Orientation

Buildings should generally be built to the edge of sidewalks without setbacks so that ground floor uses are visible and accessible from the pedestrian circulation system. The impacts of new structures on solar exposure should be considered. Buildings located on corners should be oriented to the corner and include entries, windows, canopies or other special architectural treatment. Automobile access, circulation or parking should not be located at the intersections of public streets. Blank walls should be avoided where possible and mitigated with architectural treatment where they are unavoidable. Mitigation might include small setbacks with planters and other landscaping, wall-hung trellises, indentations and modulation, and integration of art pieces.

F-9 Parking and Vehicular Circulation

Where it is necessary to include parking adjacent to a public street, the visual impact should be mitigated with street trees, landscaping or other design features.

- Curb cuts along Northwest 85th Street should be consolidated where feasible.
- Entrances to parking could include special paving and other sidewalk treatments and amenities, such as additional landscaping, signage, or art.
- Access to off-street parking around Palatine, First and Third Avenues should be consolidated where feasible.
- Access at Second Avenue's alignment is also acceptable to reinforce the grid pattern.

F-10 Mass and Scale

Reduce the impact or perceived mass and scale of large structures by modulating upper floors; varying roof forms and cornice lines; varying materials, colors and textures and providing vertical articulation of building facades in proportions that are similar to surrounding plat patterns.



Town Center
parking and
vehicular circulation
mass and scale

Appendix: Positive Design Examples



Figure A-1: Starbucks/Red Mill Burger site (67th and Phinney). This building's human scale, storefront windows, traditional materials, weather protection, wide sidewalks, and seating areas, in addition to its unique location and views, make it one of the most popular sites in the neighborhood.

Figure A-2: Apartment building (Greenwood and 76th). Streetfront setbacks, landscaping, and building modulation make this one of the better multi-family residential examples in the neighborhood.



Figure A-3: 74th Street Ale House (Greenwood and 74th). This building's modest scale, traditional storefront features, and surrounding landscaping treatments make it a positive feature of the neighborhood.

Figure A-4: Cobblestone Used Furniture (Greenwood between 84th and 85th). Again, a modest scale and traditional storefront features make this a good example. The decorative tile use, inset entry, and display windows add interest. Although the sign is large, its detailing and execution make it appropriate in its context



Figure A-5: Greenwood and 73rd. Human scale elements, traditional materials, and a pedestrian-oriented facade make this building one of the neighborhood's favorites. The decorative tile and facade details add interest from the sidewalk and the street.



Figure A-6: Pig and Whistle (Greenwood near 85th). Another popular site, this building features attractive facade details, storefront windows, traditional building materials, weather protection, and a unique and appropriately-scaled sign

Figure A-7: Victoria Townhouses (Comstock Street, Queen Anne). The use of traditional pitched roofs, gables, and bays achieves a scale and character consistent with the neighborhood



Figure A-8: Carmelita's (Greenwood between 70th and 75th). Streetfront windows highlighted with awnings and planter boxes make this simple building attractive from the sidewalk and street.



